Environmental clearance to agro project for Jojoba

2827. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal from an NRI for setting up an integrated agro project for Jojoba plantation under the Wasteland Development Scheme, sponsored through the Rajasthan Government and recommended by a multi-disciplinary high powered Committee of the Central Government, has been pending final approval in the Ministry for a quite a long time; and

(b) if so, the details of the project received and the present status of its consideration / approval?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) A proposal for setting up of an integrated agro project for Jojoba plantation in favour of M/s Shekhawati Plantation (Pvt.) Ltd., Jaipur over 330.54 ha. forest land in Jaisalmer District of Rajasthan seeking approval under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 was submitted by the State Government of Rajasthan. The proposal after careful examination was rejected in view of the fragile ecology of the area. Even otherwise, diversion of forest land for commercial plantation of non forest species is not permitted according to the guidelines under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

Environmental concerns and priorities

2828. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have identified air pollution as the top priority area of concern in a National State of Environment Report, prepared for the United Nations Environment Programme, to be considered at the second Earth Summit, 2002;

(b) if so, the details of practical strategies outlined to check the rising air pollution level, especially in the metropolitan cities; and

(c) the details of other specific areas of environmental concern

identified, priorities allocated and practical steps outlines, to correct the growing environmental imbalances?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) The State of the Environment Report prepared for India for the forthcoming Earth Summit 2002 broadly covers five priority issues pertaining to the environment. These issues include land degradation, bio-diversity, air pollution with special reference to vehicular pollution in cities, management of fresh water resources and hazardous waste management with special reference to municipal solid waste management. However, in the priority area of air pollution, top priority is given to vehicular pollution as 70% of air pollution is from vehicular emissions in the metropolitan cities of the country. The details of the practical strategies as outlines in the report to check the rising air pollution level, especially in the metropolitan cities, include the following:

- The measure to control vehicular pollution include promotion of public transport and mass rapid transport systems together with traffic planning and management, taxes on fuels and vehicles, stringent emission norms and fuel quality specifications, promotion of cleaner fuels such as CNG, replacement of two-stroke engines, and a strengthening of the inspection and maintenance (I&M) system.

- Measures to control industrial air pollution include promotion of cleaner technologies, strengthening of emission standards, introducing economic incentives, strengthening of the monitoring and reporting system, waste minimisation and utilisation and appropriate sitting of industries so as to minimise the impacts of activities on ecosystems and human health.

- Formulation of a comprehensive urban air quality management strategy using information related to urban planning, ambient air quality, an emission inventory, and air quality dispersion models Strengthening the monitoring network and institutional capabilities to facilitate an improvement in the enforcement mechanism.

- Use of cleaner fuels such as LPG in households to reduce indoor air pollution.
- Launching of the epidemiological studies to develop dose-response relationships, which will help in developing appropriate air quality standards.
- Institutions of economic instruments to encourage industries to adopt cleaner technologies and other conservation practices and to discourage the over-utilisation of natural resources.

Special protection to wild animals

†2829. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to extend special protection to wild animals which are becoming extinct;

(b) if so, whether Government have prepared any plan in this regard, so far;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Central Government has adopted the National Wildlife Action Plan for the period 2002—2016. The main components of the Action Plan are:

(i) Strengthening and enhancing the network of Protected Areas in various biogeographic regions.
(ii) Management of national parks and sanctuaries on the basis of scientifically prepared management plan through committed and skilled personnel.
(iii) Providing special protection to endangered species and their habitat.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.